



February 28, 2023

Chair Moller and members of the Public Safety Finance and Policy Committee,

The Minnesota Justice Research Center writes in regards to HF 1712, a bill that funds prevention and intervention services to youth involved or at risk of becoming involved in the criminal legal system.

The most effective way to build safe communities is to invest in young people. Intervention and prevention programs interrupt delinquent behavior, support positive youth development, and significantly decrease rates of recidivism.

Delinquency prevention programs are not just socially beneficial, they are an excellent investment. The Washington State Institute for Public Policy found that the benefits of prevention programs were far greater than their costs, and evidenced-based programs save taxpayers seven to ten dollars for every dollar invested (“Benefits and Costs Of Prevention and Early Intervention Programs For Youth,” 2004).

Likewise, the jobs grants included in this bill stop bullets. The University of Chicago Crime Lab found that a public summer jobs program for high school students from disadvantaged neighborhoods reduced violent crime arrests by 43 percent over a 16-month period (“Summer Jobs Reduce Violence among Disadvantaged Youth,” *Science*, 2014).

To strengthen and solidify these programs, the Minnesota Justice Research Center makes two recommendations:

1. Prevention and intervention programs are sustainably funded and supported as a core and permanent aspect of our responses to crime. After the violence surge of the early 1990s, for example, Minneapolis instituted Minnesota HEALS (Hope, Education, and Law and Safety) as a public-private, comprehensive violence reduction strategy. HEALS contributed to large increases in public safety but then faded away as disadvantaged youth were increasingly left behind in an unequal

city. We are reaping the returns of this disengagement today through our recent uptick in violent crime.

2. Funding for robust evaluations is included to ensure that results are being tracked and publicly disseminated. The evaluation component should be included in every sizable grant, as the transparency and accountability will boost public confidence in these programs.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Justin Terrell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "T".

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